

Buy Local, Buy WI (BLBW) Grant Program



Grant Manual FY2018 Guidelines

Proposals due to DATCP: March 9th 2018
Target Date for grant award notification: Early April 2018
Project Start date: June 2018

Questions related to the grant program should be directed to:
Kietra Olson; Kietra.Olson@Wisconsin.gov 608-224-5112

Buy Local, Buy WI (BLBW) Grant Program FY2018 Grant Manual

INTRODUCTION

The *Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin* (BLBW) program is an economic development program designed to help the Wisconsin agricultural and food industry find ways to improve food production, processing, marketing, and distribution with the ultimate goal of expanding Wisconsin's local food system. Wisconsin Producer Grants are available through BLBW grant funds, administered by the Division of Agricultural Development at the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP). Wis. Admin. ATCP §§ 161.40-161.46.

The Wisconsin legislature states that the *Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin* (BLBW) program seeks "to increase awareness and consumption of locally produced foods and related products and to increase the production and improve the distribution of foods and related products for local consumption." Wis. Stat. § 93.45.

BLBW funds promote the "development of regional food systems through activities such as creating or expanding facilities for the processing and distribution of food for local consumption; creating or supporting networks of producers; and strengthening connections between producers, retailers, institutions, and consumers and nearby producers." Wis. Stat. § 93.45.

In keeping with the objectives articulated in Wisconsin law, DATCP invites proposals for projects to increase the demand for and supply of locally produced foods in Wisconsin.

Grants are awarded following a competitive review process. Please closely refer to the evaluation criteria when preparing your proposals. The target date for grant award notification is early May 2018

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Full proposals must adhere to the requirements and objectives in the template to be provided to selected applicants. Please refer to the evaluation criteria found in this manual when preparing your full proposal. Full proposal applicants will be asked to submit a copy of organization/business 2 year budget for 2018-2019. Full proposal applicants will also be asked to include financial feasibility plan, business plan, or pro-forma financial statements for project as appropriate.

Proposal Required Elements Checklist:

- Cover Page – use template provided**
- Budget – use template provided – may not exceed 2 pages**
- Supporting Documents:**
 - **Letters of Support**
 - **Letters of Commitment from Project partners**
 - **Supporting Financial Documents**
- Narrative – may not exceed 6 pages**
 - **Proposal Background and Industry Need**
 - Describe activities/projects that have been undertaken in the past couple of years to justify the work outlined in this project.

- Explain why this program is important and timely to Wisconsin's local food system development.
- Introduce how the project will reduce hurdles impeding the expansion of Wisconsin's local food system.
- Outline the industry need that the application addresses.
- Explain what makes this project innovative as compared to similar projects.
- **Project Goals and Objectives/Work plan**
 - List the project goal(s) in one or two sentences.
 - List the specific objectives necessary to meet these goals.
 - Brief outline of work plan
- **Plan of Work Timeline**
 - Identify and explain the activities necessary to accomplish the project objectives.
 - Indicate who will do the work of each activity. If collaborative arrangements or subcontracts are used, make sure you specify their role and responsibilities in performing project activities.
 - Include timelines for accomplishing each activity.
 - Link each activity to the expected measurable results.
- **Anticipated Project Results**
 - Funded projects will be asked to report on economic development activity including: increased sales, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment generated. List and describe your economic development results and how you plan to measure them.
 - Projects must include anticipated increase of sales/purchases of WI grown products and from whom.
 - List and describe how you are meeting other anticipated results found in the evaluation criteria of the grant manual.
 - Include the process this project will use to track and measure the above increases that are directly related to project work.
- **Financial Capability/Sustained Business Growth**
 - Provide a brief overview of your organization's fiscal history, including award of other grants for this project, previous, current and future funding sources.
 - Explain how this project or outcomes from this project will continue when grant funds are gone.
 - Explain financial feasibility of project
 - Explain proof of market potential
 - Please submit appropriate supporting financial documents
 - Provide a copy of your organization/business 2 year budget for 2018-2019.
 - Include financial feasibility plan, business plan, or pro-forma financial statements.
- **Local Food Producer Support and Key Personnel**
 - What makes you the right organization/project team to carry out this project?
 - This section should also illustrate how the proposed project is either driven by or supported by local food producers and buyers.
 - List the names and contact information of committed partners to this project.
 - List the producers that are committed to selling food products as a part of this project.
 - List the buyer/markets committed to purchasing food products as a part of this project.

- List the external organizations and other partners that are critical to this project.
- Include letters of support and proof of commitment from industry leaders, and industry organizations, and your committed producers and markets

➤ **Project Replication and Communications Plan**

- Identify how the applicant will use project results to enhance its industry’s competitiveness in the state and how the applicant will share appropriate project information within the Wisconsin local foods community.
- Include a statement about how this project could be replicated in other areas of the state.
- In this communication plan, recipients must indicate how they will communicate that the DATCP Buy Local, Buy WI program is the funding agency.

Proposals must be submitted by email:

Email: Kietra.Olson@Wisconsin.gov

An original of each cover page, narrative, budget, and supporting documents must be received in that order at **DATCP by March 9th 2018 in a single pdf or Word document** in order to meet the application deadline. Paper copies, Google Drive, and Dropbox applications will not be accepted.

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

Each proposal must include sufficient information to allow the reviewers to evaluate the proposal. The proposal must merit financial support and demonstrate that the proposed project has clearly stated objectives, a sound work plan, and necessary expertise to successfully complete the project.

Evaluation Criteria
1) <u>Need</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary work justifies the proposed project. • Project demonstrates filling a business need or opportunity. • Fills or creates a clearly defined new market opportunity for selling Wisconsin produced foods to Wisconsin buyers.
2) <u>Goals/Objectives/Work Plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed work plan is reasonable in relation to timeline and project team. • Work plan clearly linked to project goals and desired outcomes. • Demonstrates innovation in project management and approach.
3) <u>Anticipated Results</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project demonstrates that it will increase the purchase of WI food products for sale to local purchasers, and includes a way to measure the increase that is directly related to project work. • Project demonstrates economic development in the form of new/retained jobs, new investment, increased sales, etc. • Shows broad impact – Project benefits the local food industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product. • Project directly impacts community development – Expanded community leadership, increased social capital, more effective non-profit and/or community based organizations, and/or improved quality of life. • Project benefits clearly demonstrate return on project investment.

- Project illustrates a direct benefit to local food producers and local markets.
- Will build supply chain infrastructure for building Wisconsin's local food system.
- Builds a competitive advantage for Wisconsin agriculture.
- Project benefits at least two or more producers or processors or a combination of the two.

Project's approach to measuring and tracking project results.

- Project clearly defines expected results.
- Project incorporates a viable method for tracking and measuring project results.
- Project goals clearly translate into anticipated results
- Budget allocation for tracking and measurement is reasonable.

4) Financial Feasibility/Sustained Business Growth

- Viability of business and market outcomes.
- Fiscal strength of applicant
- Project will result in sustained economic impact or business growth.
- Proposal clearly identifies how the project will continue/be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

5) Budget

- Justification exists for each budget item. Budget items are clear, efficient and reasonable.
- Budget items and work plan tasks are clearly linked.
- 50% of total project costs match is identified.

6) Support/Commitment

- Strong project support by participants, partners, industry and other relevant individuals or organizations.
- Project leadership and commitment.
- Capabilities of project team match needs of project.

7) Communications/Project Replication

- Clearly defines how project information will be shared with the local food community.
- Project clearly defines expected results.
- Efforts could be replicated in other areas of the state, and this is described in the proposal.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

The BLBW grant program has \$200,000 allocated for grant awards for this fiscal year 2018. Projects must be concluded within two years of contract start date. The maximum grant award is \$50,000 per project. DATCP may not make more than one grant award to the same person in the same state fiscal biennium. Grant applicants must provide cash or in-kind match equivalent to or greater than 50% of total project costs (1:1 match).

Example: Total project costs = \$100,000 (\$50,000 grant request + \$50,000 match)

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Proposals will be accepted from individuals, groups, businesses and organizations involved in Wisconsin agriculture, Wisconsin food processing, Wisconsin food distribution, Wisconsin food warehousing, Wisconsin retail food establishments, or Wisconsin agricultural tourism. Proposals may involve collaborations or partnerships between producers, food businesses, industry, academia or organizations. Applicants may cooperate with any public or private organization. Projects with broad reaching impacts will receive higher consideration. Priority will be given to **projects that benefit the**

Wisconsin food industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product. All proposed projects should be driven by or supported by local food producers and should be innovative in nature.

Each applicant must designate an individual who has authority to sign a contract with DATCP on its behalf. Each applicant must also indicate an individual who will be the lead person responsible for implementing the project. Each applicant, including co-applicants, must demonstrate a proven ability to carry out all elements of the proposed project. Preference will be given to projects whose lead person or entity has a proven track record of grant management and/or a long-standing track record of strong fiscal experience and capability. Employees of DATCP and family members (i.e., mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, and children) are not eligible to receive a grant or participate as a project collaborator.

Awarded projects will be required to present on their projects, in person, at the WI DATCP offices at or near the end of their project. The presentation should cover the original goal of the project, successes and challenges, advice on how the project can be duplicated across the state, and any other relevant findings. The date for the presentation is TBD.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligible project expenses during grant contract include, but are not limited to:

- Operating expenses, including expenses for salaries and wages, contract and consulting services, travel,* supplies and public information.
- Real estate and equipment rental or leasing.
- The purchase of equipment whose full value is ordinarily depreciable within one year.
- Reasonable depreciation expense incurred for capital equipment during the grant contract term.

* Travel expenses must follow state travel guidelines.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- Rent or contract payments for time periods extending beyond the term of the grant contract.
- Equipment purchases, except for certain equipment purchases and depreciation expenses specifically authorized in the above eligible expenses.
- Administrative or overhead costs that are not direct costs of the grant project.
- Expenses incurred prior to grant approval and signed contract date.

MATCHING FUNDS

The applicant's contributions to the project need to be identified. The applicant must provide at least 50% of the total projects costs (1:1 match). *Example: Total project costs = \$100,000 (\$50,000 grant request + \$50,000 match).* Matching funds may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions for eligible project expenses. A matching commitment may include a commitment of capital, land, labor, equipment or cash related to the grant project. Matching funds may include grant funds received from sources other than DATCP.

TENTATIVE REVIEW TIMELINE
Proposals due to DATCP: March 9th 2018
Target Date for grant award notification: Early April 2018
Project Start date: June 2018

CONTRACTS

A contract will be developed by DATCP for each funded project. Upon agreement to the contract terms by the applicant, the DATCP Secretary will consider the contract for final approval. No funding commitment is final until the contract is signed and executed. Project work may not begin until DATCP signs and returns the contract.

DATCP's BLBW program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. DATCP reserves the right to audit the applicant's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to three years after completion of the project.

PAYMENTS

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a semi-annual to quarterly basis. There must be at least two requests for reimbursement throughout the year. One large reimbursement at the end of your project will not be allowed. To receive reimbursement, grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed (i.e., include receipts and invoices) and must clearly outline expenditures. Twenty-five (25) percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the completed final report, presentation of project and receipts for all expenditures.

LIABILITY

DATCP will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of an application or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

OPEN RECORDS

Applications submitted for funding and all related contracts and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the Public Records law. If the grant applicant or recipient requests any information be deemed a trade secret, the document should be labeled using "trade secret" and the requested status should be noted to DATCP when the document is submitted. The department shall notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be trade secret by the grant recipient. Such information may be kept confidential by the department only as authorized by law (see s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats.).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. Each approved grant recipient must submit semi-annual performance reports and one final performance report.

The semi-annual performance report template will be provided and shall include the following:

1. Briefly summarize activities performed, targets, and/or performance goals achieved during the reporting period for each project.
2. Note unexpected delays or impediments as well as favorable or unusual developments for each project.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in sales of locally grown or produced Wisconsin food products, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. Other quantitative measures including number of producers and Wisconsin buyers affected by work, infrastructural improvements to local food industry, and media/communication work performed.
5. Outline work to be performed during the next reporting period for each project.
6. Comment on the level of grant funds expended to date for each project.

The final performance report template will be provided and shall include the following:

1. A brief description of original intent of the project and perceived benefit of the project. How the issue or problem was approached via the project.
2. How the goals of the project were achieved.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in sales of locally grown or produced Wisconsin food products, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.
5. How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures for each project.
6. Additional information available (e.g., publications, web sites).
7. A plan to disseminate the project results to the industry.
8. Contact person for each project with telephone number and email address.

In addition to the final project report, DATCP reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

All applications submitted in response to this RFP become the property of DATCP. The agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement.

DATCP also reserves the right to:

- Post funded applications to the DATCP website.
- Reject any or all applications received.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received, after prior notification and agreement of applicant.
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of Wisconsin.

- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants.
- Require a good faith effort on the part of the project sponsor to work with DATCP subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results in Wisconsin.
- Withhold any payments when contract conditions are not met.

BLBW APPLICATION TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

As you develop your grant application and work to create the strongest application possible, consider the following tips and suggestions.

- Have a UW Agricultural Extension Agent, educator, industry expert or producer read your application and provide feedback.
- Use an outline to help you organize your application.
- Keep your responses brief and focused on the purpose and impact of the project.
- Focus on project tasks and results, not on philosophy and personal opinion.

NOTES

1. Wisconsin food products: “Food product” means an unprocessed commodity or processed product that is used for food or drink by humans. “Food product” includes a food product ingredient. “Wisconsin food product” means a food product that is one of the following: grown in this state; produced from animals kept in this state; or primarily derived from food products that are grown in this state or produced from animals kept in this state.
2. Local purchaser: “Local purchaser” means a consumer who buys a Wisconsin food product at a location near the place where the food product is produced, or a person who buys a Wisconsin food product for resale at a location near the place where the food product is produced.

Detailed Budget and Budget Summary – May not exceed two pages

- Include a budget narrative to more fully describe project expenses.
- Expenses listed should directly result in anticipated measurable outcomes.

- Identify 1:1 in-kind or cash match contributions.
- For salary/fringe and subcontractor/consultant, identify who and what work is to be done and use an hourly rate.
- Refer to the grant manual to see eligible and ineligible expenses.
- Matching funds must also be eligible project expenses.

Budget Summary Table

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Grant Request</u>	<u>Matching Contributions</u>
Salaries, Wages, & Fringe Benefits			
Contract & Consulting Services			
Supplies & Materials			
Travel*			
Public Information (Media/brochures/mailings)			
Real estate/Equipment rental			
Equipment**			
Other/Misc. (Describe)			
<u>TOTAL</u>			

* Travel expenses must follow state travel guidelines. For details: <http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=6800>.

** The purchase of equipment whose full value is ordinarily depreciable within one year.

